

## **Raw Public Feedback given at 5/15/13 Groton POCD Public Presentation**

### **Housing**

Is the increase in conservation development/open space developments since 2002 successful from a housing perspective?

Is there adequate housing for changing demographics? 65+, smaller households? Can multi-family development be net-positive for the tax base?

Is there adequate properly zoned, vacant land available to meet these changing household demographics?

Improve the existing areas that we currently have, as Groton population is slightly decreasing.

Highlight issue of the relation of future housing to problems of sprawl and energy use.

Encourage cluster and infill development to avoid sprawl.

Implement mixed use.

Reduce suburban sprawl.

Shift focus from 'development' to 're-purposing' existing aging structures and facilities.

Permit conversion of large Mystic houses to multi-family, maybe elderly.

Focus density to villages, new development with open space components.

Siting of elderly housing in nodes – connection to walkable services.

### **Land Use**

New development should focus on areas that already have existing infrastructure.

Stormwater concerns related to runoff from impermeable surfaces – more frequent 500-year and 100-year storms due to climate change.

More information is needed on encouraging small business, light manufacturing. Businesses that MAKE things, not sell things.

Review plans (zoning regulations & building codes) for Poquonnock Rd from Newtown Rd to Long Hill Rd, Long Hill to Rte 12. Determine if mixed use building is viable. These areas already have water, sewer, electricity. Also enough space for parking while also providing pedestrian access safely.

Housing is not a large issue. Having a healthy business community is. More effort is needed to get small businesses in place. Spend money to upgrade existing areas – not on more water & sewer lines.

Developable land should not include floodplains, riparian areas or areas within coastal area impacted by inundation & rising sea levels.

Encourage incubator manufacturing properties in areas that are already sewer/watered.

The Town should not run water and sewer lines out to Flanders Rd – costs may be too high without guaranteed payback.

It makes sense to actively solicit small to medium businesses in existing vacant storefronts and vacant land.

Small and medium businesses are preferable to attract to Groton. Large industries such as Electric Boat and Pfizer can provide some economic benefits, but also can be profit-driven to the expense of their community.

The Navy Base can't be depended on to be a permanent fixture. Groton should consider other industrial clients that could utilize the deep channel in the Thames River for shipping.

Keep the environment a top priority with any large development projects.

The Town should be very alert to grant opportunities and should plan to use solar power on new and retrofit projects wherever possible in the future.

Solicit public input at the beginning stages of planning projects.

Don't develop on existing open spaces.

Repurpose/infill in a big way!

The 2002 POCD was very weak in encouraging growth in already developed areas & away from potential open space protected areas. Need to strengthen commitment to protecting reservoirs, streams, wetlands.

Redevelop to avoid sprawl into undeveloped areas.

New FEMA maps do not take into consideration rising sea level due to climate change. New POCD needs to.

### **Natural Resources**

Importance of the Long Island Sound as an economic driver, with a calculated economic value of \$8.5 billion, much from recreational boating and sport fishing.

### **Parks and Open Space**

Open space should be considered a worthy investment for the Town.

We would like to see a well-heated community swimming pool.

Existing and future unused school buildings should be converted to town or commercial uses, community recreation use, or converted to open space and playground areas.

Concept of quality of life should figure in to discussion of natural resources and open space.

Should some farmland preservation be encouraged?

The former Noank Elementary School should not be designated as open space on these maps. It's zoned residential.

Preserve and expand active farmland to increase resilience of local foodshed – links to climate change and resilience.

### **Historic Resources**

The future most likely will require us to produce some if not most of our own food, and developing farmlands will leave us hungry. The Marritt Family Forest off Rte 1 and Fishtown Rd has been a farm in the past along Fishtown Rd.

What is the attendance at public historic houses?

Pine Island is on State Register of Historic Places since 2009.

Why are the buildings on Rte 1 in Mystic in the Historic District? What's historic about them?

Farms as historic assets & potential food production areas in future.

Upgrades to Ft. Griswold interpretation.

### **Transportation**

Use federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act money for more sidewalks & bikeways, and finish Thomas Rd bikeway/sidewalks.

Add bikeway plan to the POCD.

Stop bonding for normal road maintenance.

Many more safe bike & hiking trails

Is CT unusual in decline in traffic volumes?

Improvements need to be made to local bus and rail service, but much will depend on whether Groton populations decreases.

The alleged need for more roads between 117 and Flanders is debatable. Connector road has repeatedly been rejected.

How can we encourage more use of public transportation to help address CO<sub>2</sub> problems?

Shoreline East should have stops in downtown Groton, downtown Mystic, and Westerly.

Need to increase bus service in Mystic/Noank/southeast corner.

East-West connections should not disturb important water features.

Allyn St. Exit area design issues? Congestion?

Difficult for people with mobility issues trying to take public transit.

One woman told the story of her disable son taking 6 hours to bus to and from a doctor's appointment in Norwich on the bus – need better routes, shorter headways.

Where is the Tri-Town north-south bike path proposal?

Investigate the Mystic group working on expanding bikeways.

How to reconnect the historic “villages” of Groton with walking, biking & public transit? Need a concept plan.

Work with major employers on connecting workers to nodes.

There are more trails than noted on map.

Remember, roads are not an end in themselves. The focus should be on communities.

Think of ecosystem services as infrastructure & value accordingly.

Do not include east-west connections.

More public transit (buses)

ADA transportation linked to SEAT lines – are they in jeopardy?

Village nodes better for people with disabilities, lessen need for transportation.

General comments:

Need a write-up of exactly how Groton 2002 POCD met its goals.